

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 5, 2015

Nevada Department of Education, 700 E. 5th Street, Carson City, Nevada with video conference to UNR
Cooperative Extension, Suite 100, Room A, 8050 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nevada

Committee Members Present:

- Kelcey West – Carson City
- Stavan Corbett – Carson City
- Jeff Hinton – Carson City
- Jennifer Hoy – Carson City
- Billiejo Hogan – Carson City
- Denette Corrales – Carson City
- Nick Smith – Carson City
- Stacie Wilke-McCulloch – Carson City

Members Absent/Excused:

- Teresa Benitez-Thompson
- Patricia Farley

Staff Members Present:

- Rose Avila
- Dena Durish
- Pat Bishop

Audience in Attendance:

- D’Lisa Crain – Carson City
- Rommy Cronin – Carson City
- Kelley Miner – Carson City
- John Eppolito – Carson City
- Amber Lasata – Las Vegas
- Eva Melendrez – Las Vegas
- Robin Kincaid – Las Vegas
- Caryne Shea – Las Vegas

Item #1 - Call to Order; Roll Call; Pledge of Allegiance:

Dena Durish, Director, NDE Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Division called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM, Thursday, February 5, 2015, with Roll Call taken and committee members in attendance as reflected above. Director Durish led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item #2 - Public Comment:

Director Durish opened the floor for public comment. In Las Vegas, Robin Kincaid, Nevada PEP, introduced herself. Eva Melendrez, Clark County School District, Family and Community Engagement Services introduced herself. Amber Lasata to join at a later time.

In Carson City, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dale Erquiaga, thanked the council for their willingness to serve and to advise this department, legislature and the governor on these issues. With the new structure, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement has been elevated to a Division. Parents and families are on a par with educators in our new structure. There is a division that is focused on students, a division that is focused on finance and a division that is focused on the adults.

Parents and families are the adults in our system. It was a critical change that caused some delays in operation. Statutes outline the responsibilities of the council. Governor Sandoval outlined an aggressive and positive vision to get to what he calls, “the New Nevada.” The hurdles are literacy issues, chronic underperforming schools and a funding system that doesn’t differentiate for our students. In 1955, education was driven by families, in particular a group of mothers called the Committee of Little Mothers. They organized, dealt with the legislators and secured the passage of a 2% sales tax which led to the passage of the Peabody Report, the precursor of the structure we have today. There is a need for families to participate in the governor’s vision. No other public comment in Carson City.

Item #3 - Introduction of Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement Staff and Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement Members:

Handout details positions of council members, who appointed them and which NRS category each represents. Director Durish gave her background. Rose Avila gave her background and what she brings to the office. Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General, assigned to DOE, also introduced himself and gives representation to various boards that work closely with DOE. The committee members introduced themselves and gave their backgrounds.

Due to presenter schedules, Item #9 was moved earlier in the agenda.

Item #9 - Overview of PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and Nevada PTA:

Kelley Miner, PTA member, gave her background. She’s been involved in family engagement for 8 years. Gave history of PTA, and shared that it is a powerful voice for all children, a resource for communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Discussed the 6 PTA national standards for family-school partnerships and parent family involvement which translate to increased student success. She shared that only one third of 4th and 8th graders can read and do math at proficiency levels. She states that if we expect to increase these levels, parents and families need to become more involved. The six standards approved in 2007 identify what parents, schools and communities can do together for student success. Council members participated in a round table discussion of the 6 national standards, suggesting what action would support the standard. Director Durish encouraged viewing the national and Nevada PTA websites, stating they are excellent resources.

Item #4 Overview of Nevada Revised Statutes: NRS Chapter 241 – Meetings of State and Local Agencies (Open Meeting Law):

Greg D. Ott, Deputy Attorney General, gave an overview of the Open Meeting Law and provided a handout.

- Open Meeting Law (OML), NRS 241, places certain requirements on public bodies.
- Intent of law is that all public bodies be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.
- All meetings of public bodies, 2 or more people, that make collective decisions, require a quorum.
- Action taken in violation of OML can lead to a court case. There are criminal and civil penalties for violation of the OML.
- Enforcement against a member happens if the member knows his vote was in violation of the OML.
- Components of OML include agendas, non-meeting conduct, meetings, and public access.
- Agendas must provide and clear and a complete statement of the topics scheduled for discussion. If not a part of the stated agenda, the public cannot participate, therefore discussion should be avoided or agendized for the next meeting. Any action has to be clearly stated on the agenda.
- Can talk amongst each other as long as there is no quorum, being mindful that if 2 members talk to 2 other members, it can add up to a quorum. Texting is included.
- Meeting cannot start before stated time.

- Public comment must be a part of every meeting, both at the beginning and end to allow public participation.
- OML manual available on the Attorney General's website.
- Openness is the norm, promoting openness in government the goal.

Member Corrales expressed her gratitude with the presentation. Member Wilke stated the need for OML and the guidelines provided.

Item #5 - Nevada Department of Education Overview:

Director Durish presented an overview of the Nevada Department of Education and the new structure.

- The Superintendent of Public Instruction is a governor appointed position. Developed the vision, mission and goals that guide the NDE.
- Leadership team provides 5 goals in order to improve student achievement and educator effectiveness.
 1. Students proficient in reading by end of 3rd grade.
 2. Students enter high school with skills necessary to succeed.
 3. All students graduate college and career ready
 4. Effective educators serving students at all levels.
 5. Efficient and effective use of public funds to achieve the highest return on educational investment.
- NDE structured into three divisions under Superintendent Erquiaga: Business and Support, Student Achievement, and Educator Effectiveness & Family Engagement.
- Superintendent Erquiaga added a new position of Public Information Officer. The PIO provides information to the public which includes information about finances, programs, the assessment system or different concerns statewide.
- A new proposed position is a Director of Safe and Respectful Learning Office.
- Business and Support Services Division now includes Department Support as well as School District Support and Audit.
- Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Division includes Licensure, Educator Development and Support, and Office of Parent Involvement and Family Engagement.
- Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement supports several councils which includes the Commission on Professional Standards, Teacher and Leaders Council, Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPD's and Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement.
- Student Achievement Division includes providing Standards and Instructional Support, Assessment, Data & Accountability Management, Career Readiness, Early Learning & Development, Student and School Support and Special Education.
- New Licensure website will be rolled out on 2/15/15.

Public Comment:

DAG Greg Ott introduced a member of the public who wanted to comment on the above issue with a 3 minute limitation. He clarified that no action could be taken and that it would be for the boards information only.

John Eppolito referred to the handout titled, Nevada Department of Education Overview. He cited that Dr. James Milgram rewrote the California math standards with three other educators from Stanford. Data showed those standards worked. Common Core math standards have failed and leave us more than two years behind high achieving countries. He asserts that Dr. Sandra Stotsky and Dr. Louisa Moats state the ELA standards in use which Nevada has elected to adopt, Common Core standards, go against a century of research in teaching reading and writing. In addition, he wondered why we don't use proven standards like Massachusetts, Indiana, California and other states. Instead Nevada is throwing everything at the new standards that he claims won't work. He further asserts that if Nevada wants to prepare students for the 21st century, teach them traditional skills teach them math, teach them how to read and write. Teach

them coding, how to program, if Nevada really wants to get them ready for the 21st century. The whole country of Estonia starts every student in first grade. What are we doing? Silly math. Regarding the Goal 3, he is not sure it is possible to get the students ready for careers and college at the same time. His son wants to go to Stanford; his friend wants to become a real estate broker. He was unsure what common skills they will need. His son finished his common core math as a 9th grader. Every class past the 9th grade for him is beyond common core. Governor Sandoval's new business round table education committee does not have any teachers on that committee so he doesn't know how you can call it an education committee.

End of allotted 3 minutes.

No other public comment in Carson City or Las Vegas.

Director Durish presented the handout, Governor Sandoval's Recommended Budget: 2015-2017 Biennium which details the proposals for Early Learners, Modernizing the Nevada Plan, Middle School and High School and Investing in Change. The details can be found on the NDE website, search Resources for Legislative Updates and information, Nevada Ready, standards and assessments as well as look in Hot Topics.

Item #6 - Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement: History and Duties:

Rose Avila, Education Program Professional, NDE, Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, gave the presentation titled PIFE Council Meeting, February 5, 2015, which included:

- Research evidence indicates that parental involvement is linked to student success.
- Collaboration with families is being brought to the forefront of national awareness. Every parent shares a responsibility in the education of their children.
- History of the council was given including the statutes that provided for the Council. Council was established in 2007; the Office was opened and staffed March, 2012.
- Title was changed to Parental Involvement and Family Engagement to acknowledge not all students live in a traditional nuclear family.
- Stated Nevada Revised Statutes that define the Council, its duties and responsibilities and the required reports.
- Detailed budget amounts for FY2015. Also detailed proposed budget for FY16 & 17. Need to develop a comprehensive plan for financial resources.

Member Corrales wanted to know if monies from FY15 can be used to purchase airfare in advance for meetings in FY16. EPP Avila responded that the funds for FY15 need to be used by June 30, 2015.

Director Durish to check with fiscal regarding the usage.

Director Durish commented further on the historical timeline which gives a snapshot of the Council.

- Legislator Debbie Smith and Barbara Clark, former Washoe County School Board President, spearheaded a lot of this work and are credited with bringing it to the forefront.
- The fact that the office is the only office of the department in statute is an example of their having moved this topic forward and started the conversation with the legislators.
- The responsibility now lies on parents, educators and the Council to take serious action and make changes.
- Summit on Parent Involvement is held every two years. The first summit was held in 2006 before the council and office existed. Funded by private funds. Need to recognize the large number of family advocates who worked together to put the summit together.

Item #7 - Election of Officers:

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General, explained the two positions, Chairman and Vice Chairman to be nominated and voted on by the Council. DAG Ott listed the positions that needed to be filled and the responsibilities of each office. Director Durish referenced the handout, Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees, which can be used as a reference. The handout explained the responsibilities in more detail. DAG Ott opened the floor for nominations. Member Corbett nominated Member Denette

Corrales for Chairman. There were no other nominations and no comment. All approved the nomination. Member Corrales accepted the position. Member West nominated Member Jeffrey Hinton for Vice Chairman. There were no other nominations and no comment. All were in favor of the nomination. Member Hinton accepted the nomination.

Item #8 - Possible Future Meeting Dates and Preferred Meeting Format:

Director Durish referenced the handout detailing the possible meeting dates for 2015. All of the dates are available in the boardrooms of Carson City and Las Vegas and will be video-conferenced. There also needs to be a quorum of six (6) for each available date.

- Chairwoman Corrales suggested hosting a face-to-face meeting with legislators. The meeting could be beneficial in requesting increased funding. During the last session in 2013, the council meeting was held at that time instead of in the boardrooms. Various foods were offered as an incentive to the legislators to come in and meet with the council.
- Director Durish reminded the Council the Assembly Committee on Education meets every Monday and every Wednesday at 3:15 pm. The Senate Committee on Education meets every Tuesday, Thursday and on a 3rd Friday because of the numerous education initiatives at 3:30 pm.
- Chairwoman Corrales stated Assemblywoman Diaz helped to organize the last meeting with the legislature.
- Member Hoy stated she thought this type of meeting was essential that the council has a presence, suggesting possibly two (2) days, especially going into May.
- Director Durish offered to get the information on room accessibility for the April date with the possible dates of March and May should April not be available.
- It was determined a quorum would be present in the future meeting dates.
- Chairwoman Corrales suggested the benefits of meeting face-to-face and then meeting every other month, alternating between Carson City and Las Vegas, as the budget would allow. The schedule is as follows: March 13th in Las Vegas, April 16th in Carson City, May 22nd in Las Vegas, July 9th in Carson City, September 17th in Las Vegas, and November 3rd in Carson City. Members voiced if they will not be present.
- DAG Ott stated there is no need for a vote.

Due to presenter schedules, Item #9 was moved earlier in the agenda.

Item #10 - School District Advisory Councils Overview and Status Update

EPP Avila used the handout, School District Advisory Councils, detailing an overview of the specific NRS regulation that relates to advisory councils, both at the state level and at the school district level.

- NRS 385.625 states the board of trustees of a school district may establish an advisory council on parental involvement and family engagement to work in conjunction with the state Advisory Council. 7 of 17 school districts have established or are developing local advisory councils.
- One of the directions of this statute is the state council is to provide support to the local advisory councils and encourage the school districts which have not established such a council to consider creating one.
- Regarding the PIFE role, the board of trustees of a school district may establish an advisory council to work in conjunction with the state Advisory Council.
- The gathered information is to be used for future planning, in deciding what needs to be done to insure the statute is adhered to.
- Director Durish further explained the statutory role of the council, that the council is responsible for making recommendations to the superintendent or to the other state bodies regarding the progress or process of establishing school district advisory councils.

Item #11 - Long and Short-Term Work Plan/Goal Setting and

Item #12 - Meeting Summary and Future Meeting Agenda Items:

- Director Durish explained the difficulties in issuing licenses with the state mandated course on Family Involvement and Parental Engagement and reciprocity. 90% of the other states don't have this stand-alone class or one similar to it. The February 26th meeting of Commission on Professional Standards will revisit this conversation. She is requesting a future meeting item at the March 13th to discuss recommendations prior to the commission hearing. It is a challenge to issue licenses with reciprocity.
- Need to discuss long-term and short-term goal planning, what does the council want to do, where to start with the goals, what information is necessary to have, what things would they like Rose to bring to the table, what information would you like to request.
- In addition to the advisory councils, EPP Avila has a contact person at each school district designated as the Family Involvement and Parental Engagement council representative. There are members of the public also designated as contacts.
- Council should request best practices or strategies from those who have done this work in the past.
- EPP Avila used a handout that details the Advisory Council on Family Engagement work plan and what the council is responsible for as well as the information on the handout School District Advisory Council update. Need to look at this information to help determine long and short term goals, what to prioritize and work on.
- Chairwoman Corrales mentioned a previous work plan that included a timeline. Is it available and how does it tie to the statutes? Director Durish affirms they do have a copy of that work plan and has used it as a reference, to take a look at where the council is at. Is to provide an update. Chairwoman Corrales references a February deadline in the Council's NRS for reporting Council annual activities. Durish notes that missing this was due to the delayed Council meeting schedule and the Department reorganization. Council members will need the information, including the upcoming timeline, in order to review it in advance of the next meeting.
- Director Durish felt there is a need to make recommendations to the state board in regards to policy, which at this time they have not been able to find a record of. Referring to the State Board meeting schedule, set a target date to present recommendations. This will require research in order to make an informed decision. In regards to a recommendation, what would the key components be, what would they include. A possible starting point would be to look at the policies of parental involvement that have been adopted by the individual school boards of each district. Possibly inviting representatives to come and speak to the policies that have been adopted, and to share those model programs. With that information, the council could come up with a recommendation so that the state board could look at that and then pass that recommendation.
- Chairwoman Corrales thought it would be good to contact other state departments of education and see if they have a policy and what it is. Director Durish states that EPP Avila meets monthly with state representatives from all other agencies. She suggested a survey of those representatives. Would present the top 4 questions to ask the members of the other states. She listed several possible questions for this survey keeping in mind the statutory duties of the council. This would be a great resource.
- Director Durish referred to one of the statutory duties of the council, specifically mentioning the review of effective practices carried out in individual school districts to increase parental involvement and especially determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices on a statewide basis. Taking it to scale, what does that look like in each member's context.
- Director Durish referenced the annual report of accountability for each school district. One item that each school district has to submit is a school performance plan. Are these written targeted plans. As an example, which of the standards are the schools not adhering to. Is there a difference between our rural counties and our suburban counties and/or different grade level schools. Possibly share that aggregate data, noticing the different trends and then give advice

back to the district detailing where they could make changes in their practices. Are the standards feasible in each setting and are they getting the intended results.

- Chairwoman Corrales asked the other council members what they would like the council to address short term. And looking at the end goal, what information is needed to get there.
- Member Corbett asked for a level of communication from EPP Avila, Director Durish and potentially the Superintendent as it relates to what the overall object is. There is a difference between what is in print and reality, how does that amalgamate with one another and how does it ensure there is a level of continuity. He also encouraged a look at the local school district councils that have something in place, and see where they are at. He would like to see a platform provided by the next meeting as a starting point. That would be very helpful.
- Member Hogan agreed and would like to see what has been worked on so far. Schools have to submit what they are doing in regards to parent and family engagement according to standards, and then submit them to the district. This should be monitored as much as student data and other goals in the school. She would like to see the parent advisory council help determine how the school is doing, to sit in on every school and be involved in the monitoring process. She also shared an example of her district's science night, where there was an opportunity to do a quick survey of the parents during a science night at the school which would have provided more information on how to reach out to parents in a different way and what can be done better.
- Member Hoy states teachers are told to communicate with the parents but each has a different way of doing that. It needs to be looked at realistically and at what are the more effective ways, especially what the parents are paying attention to. Discussion ensued. Communication needs to be down to the school level.
- Director Durish states the past year was focused on how to become better communicators. How does the department interact with schools, with districts other than monitoring. The past was compliance driven instead of outcome and goal based. Clearer communication has increased under Superintendent Erquiaga's direction. There is an ongoing discussion regarding the role EPP Avila is to play, who she is to participate with. There is an importance to having a district liaison and for each district to have an advisory council to drill down and get the message out to the community. One possibility is to have a website that includes information for each sector, possibly encouraging teachers and parents to interact. Also look at social media to communicate.
- Member Hinton states he has used Edmodo extensively. Parent engagement is difficult with this website, success rate is low.
- Member Wilke states she has had more parental involvement with Edmodo at the middle school level due to the families having the devices at home. They have a mobile one-on-one night where they instruct the parents how to get on the website and what information is available.
- Member Corbett reminds that there is a social-economic culture that would determine the success of using Edmodo. He feels it's important to have the school district share the information giving a broader perspective.
- Chairwoman Corrales suggested a presentation from a school district liaison at the next meeting. EPP Avila to coordinate that. It was also suggested that one or more school district liaisons present what they are doing at each meeting. Director Durish suggested that this type of presentation be a standing agenda item at each meeting.
- Director Durish recapped her understanding of what is to be included in the next meeting. This includes: EPP Avila to provide an update on what other states have in place including a comparison state by state and what specific policies they are utilizing, to be used in forming a recommendation to the state board policy; to provide district policies, who has what and providing a hard copy for review and subsequent conversation; local council presentations - highlighting either local councils and/or offices in each district and the work that they do; taking one of the statutory roles of the council to insure addressing them in some way; effective methods of communication; possibly focus on one standard, the strategies used.
- Member Smith states communication is important, would like to see the council work to support parent home visits and cites WCSD has provided additional funding to increase those.

He feels communication has not been disseminated down to the lowest levels and they are the one's dealing with the kids and the families. It's good to have councils, superintendents, and principals but it's the teachers who, if they don't get the information, they can't disseminate it down. Would like to see the council to find ways to encourage that and possibly look at legislative ways to put money towards that. He feels personal interaction is the most effective way to communicate because it is one to one, not using technology. Community meetings have shown that parents want the educational system to reach out to them.

- Chairwoman Corrales states that EPP Avila in her previous employment instituted a program in WCSD and was highlighted at one of the Connecting the Dots summits. This body of knowledge would be excellent to incorporate as one of the best practices. While not in the home, it is a one on one communication. It impacted student achievement in a very positive way. She agreed in general with the marketing comment but there is value in having a message as a council that is consistently shared when engaging with various constituents.
- EPP Avila states establishing the line of communication is first to take stock of what is going on out there, where school districts are, how they are communicating their policies down to their teachers and how they correlate with the policies the council wants to recommend. Support to what they already have in place, what they are already doing and grow that. This has to be at the forefront of what the council does because the districts vary in what they are doing in regards to parent engagement and they have had huge initiatives and roll outs on their own and the council needs to complement that. Need to keep this in mind when deciding recommendations. Communication also needs to be complementary to what is going on at the school district level so that the council is growing the work, not stalling the work. She will gather whatever data is available and present it to the council. Finally, how does the council put this information out there as a package.
- Director Durish asked the council what is the time frame the council would like to meet. Chairwoman Corrales suggested working a full day, with a working lunch and fly out on the last flight available. EPP Avila states both board rooms are booked for 9 to 5 so there is flexibility. Member West agrees to working as full a day as possible, with lunch provided and coffee. Chairwoman Corrales clarified what a working lunch means, need to find a place to deliver and paid for by the council member. Director Durish reminded that for those that travel, there is a per diem that would pay for the meal.
- Chairwoman Corrales asked for clarification regarding discussion with Director Durish and EPP Avila and quorum issues. DAG Ott assured her that both she and Member Hinton can talk freely with them without violating open meeting law.
- Member Wilke asks as a council member, what is the role, what can be done between now and then that will ensure a productive meeting in March. What expectations, what research, what can be done in advance. Chairwoman Corrales responded that EPP Avila has been given several items to work on and suggests that meeting information is provided to members as soon as possible in advance for review. But she also stated that the council members can do their own research if direction is given. In the state of Nevada, the research could include the best practices that are being utilized. The council members can also attend local school district councils and then send that information to EPP Avila so she can synthesize that and then present it at the next meeting.

Item #14 - Public Comment #2:

In Las Vegas, Robin Kincaid from Nevada PEP, which represents approximately 52, 000 Nevada students that are receiving special education services. She would like to give a 10 – 15 minute presentation in an upcoming meeting, possibly in the May meeting to be worked out with staff. They serve families with children ages 0 to 26 and as she indicated, there is approximately a little over 50,000 students receiving special education. What they would like to present to the council is some of the things that are being done to strengthen the relationships between schools and families. Parents of children receiving special education, parental engagement looks different. Would appreciate the opportunity to present the wealth

of materials and talk about the strategies, the ideas and the ways they want to help strengthen relationships and improve student achievement. EPP Avila to coordinate with Ms. Kincaid so she will have the opportunity to give her presentation at the next Las Vegas meeting. Ms. Kincaid offered to be a resource to the council.

In Carson City, John Eppolito mentioned the conference with Drs. Stotsky and Moats is posted on their website and encouraged the council to watch it. He felt what took place was “pretty pathetic.” The doctors had given the presentation to 30 other states and in Nevada was the worst they had ever been treated by the Nevada Department of Education. He stated the council needed to see what is going on. There is an explanation of why the NDE refused to show up at the 11th hour, and to cancel the forum in Fallon the following evening. What came up in the meeting is that Common Core is not researched based. The Dept. of Ed. can say it’s research based all they want but unfortunately it is not. The SBAC exams that are being rolled out now, this 4th grade exam is a 10 hour exam. It will last all week. It is designed to fail 2/3 of the kids. The results will not be available until next school year. It’s absolutely not helpful to the teacher, the parent or the student. It appears the main reason for the test is to penalize teachers and to track the student. The tracking is incredible. He stated that it’s information the state shouldn’t have, information the federal government shouldn’t have, and information third parties shouldn’t have. We have to find a way to be able to opt out of this test. Yesterday, a lady down in Las Vegas posted what Clark County School District gave her. It’s incredible what is happening. This state is the only state that said to see your children’s data, it would cost \$10,000. That was me they told that to. It’s ridiculous. It’s the only state in the country that’s done that and we’re the ones that treated Stotsky and Milgrim the worst. You guys really need to pay attention to what is going on here. I’ll give you a copy of the letter that Clark County put out a few days ago but it just made it to Facebook yesterday. Thank you.

No other comment in Carson City.

Meeting Adjournment:

Director Durish closed the council meeting at 12:58 pm.